

Unveiling the artisanal fish trade network in coastal Kenya (with focus on key stakeholders and fish products)

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Artisanal fisheries provide direct employment to several tens of millions and indirect employment to more tens of millions all over the world. Kenyan coastal communities have for long depended on fishing and related activities for their livelihood. Due to its longevity of existence and development, the small scale industry is itself a hive of activities- from fishing to marketing the final fish products. As such, the industry is characterized by a unique organization and challenges between and among the fishermen, buyers, government and other stakeholders such as NGOs. There are also interesting links and processes between the fishermen and small scale traders which shape the fish trade dynamics. Although the trade is described as tradition and artisanal by literature, various sources report that the markets are dominated by dynamism, competition and demand for more and new fish products.

This study will attempt to further understand the organization and challenges of the fish trade, at least among the small scale fishermen and buyers, by setting the following general objectives:

- To identify the challenges and intra-group organization among the fishermen and traders in the context of acquiring the fish and accessing suitable markets / products.
- To identify ways in which traders influence fishermen practices - by selection of fish and provision of capital.
- To get an estimate of fish landing weights and catch composition
- To quantify change in fish landing and fish price in the past years
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Structured questionnaires, informal interviews, observations and weight measurements were used in collecting data. Primary results to be presented will include a network showing roles of key stakeholders in the fish trade and trends in the trade over the last 10 years. In addition, fish composition at landing and in the market as well as an estimate of price of fish at each trading level will be shown. Challenges reported by the stakeholders will be listed and categorized based on their cause *i.e.* social or ecological.

With this study we aim to enhance the understanding of the artisanal fish trade, which is paramount in supporting livelihoods. We also seek to identify interventions at the different trade levels that can make the trade more viable and sustainable.

Keywords: artisanal fisheries; stakeholders